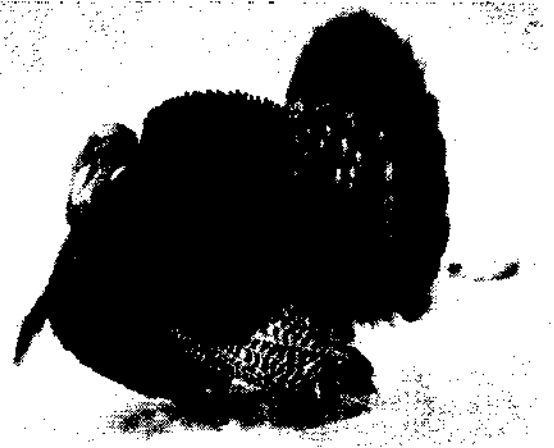


****ATTENTION****

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SAFE TURKEY HUNTING

Turkey hunting can be a dangerous sport, but it is a safe sport if hunters follow a few common-sense guidelines. Most turkey hunting accidents result from shooters failing to exercise the first rule of hunting safety—identifying the target. Here are two typical accidents that happened in another state:

A turkey was vigorously gobbling near a hunter. The hunter said he saw a turkey move behind a tree about 35 yards away and when the turkey came into sight, he shot. The turkey turned out to be another hunter, who was killed.

A turkey hunter was using a gobbler call. He had on brown gloves with a red lining. As the hunter moved his hands, another hunter thought it was a turkey's head, and shot, wounding the victim. The shooter said that he had watched the movement of the victim's hand for some time; the red glove lining associated with the gobbler call confirmed in his mind that it was a gobbler.

You can avoid such accidents and have an enjoyable turkey hunting experience by observing the following guidelines:



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1. *Always ask permission to hunt on private land.* Don't spoil your hunt (and a landowner's day) by assuming that you can hunt. Most landowners are cooperative if you ask first. If you don't ask, you can be sure no one will hunt there again.

2. *Don't attempt an approach closer than 100 yards.* A turkey's eyes, ears and awareness are many times better than yours. He can spot you and be gone before you have a chance to call him. Also, you never know when there may be another hunter close by, who might mistake you for the turkey.

3. *Select a tree that is wider than your shoulders and body to sit against.* This protects you from any hunter who may come in from behind you, mistaking you for a real turkey. This also conceals you

from that wise old bird what decides to circle you and come in from the rear.

4. *Don't jump and turn at a turkey approaching your back.* The chance of getting a good shot is very slim. At best, you may wound the bird and he will get away, possibly dying later. Be patient, remain still and let the bird pass.

5. *Don't hide so well that you can't see what is happening.* Blinds are a good and productive tool for the turkey hunter. But, where constructed so well that vision is obstructed, it is no longer a blind. It is a hiding place, as beneficial to the turkey as it is to you.

6. *Select a calling site that gives at least 40 yards of vision in all directions.* At 40 yards that old bird is in shooting range. Anything over this is too far. At 40 yards you can identify your turkey or anyone who may approach you. And that means no surprises!

7. *Don't attempt to stalk a turkey.* First, that gobbler you're stalking may turn out to be another hunter. Second, your chances of success are slim to none. If you're

SAFE TURKEY HUNTING

lucky, you might get a glimpse of his tail feathers. Give the old bird the respect he is due.

8. *Unless absolutely necessary, don't use a gobbler call.* This call can be productive, and also very dangerous. In areas of high hunter concentrations, you will call many more hunters to you than turkeys. Use this call when all else fails, and then sparingly.

9. *Remember that being fully camouflaged doesn't make you completely invisible.* Movement is the greatest enemy to the turkey hunter. A turkey can detect and react to movement 10 times faster than a man. Even though camouflaged, you are still an unnatural form in the woods.

10. *Never wear any red, white or blue clothes.* These are the colors of the gobbler's head, the primary target of the turkey hunter.

11. *Never presume that what you hear is a turkey.* Many turkey hunters are very good and convincing callers. Never try to get too close. If this bird turns out to be another hunter, it could be very dangerous, as well as embarrassing.

12. *If another hunter is working a bird, don't spoil it by trying to call the bird to you or spooking*

the bird. This is very unsportsmanlike; good turkey hunters just don't do this.

13. *Don't allow dogs to run free in turkey areas.* In the spring, they will run the hens off the nests. They will catch young birds and kill them. In the fall and winter, they will bust up flocks, making the birds more susceptible to predators. Additionally, using dogs to hunt turkeys is illegal.

14. *It is illegal and very poor sportsmanship to hunt over bait.* Hunting over bait has long been considered an improper turkey hunting method. Challenge yourself! Hunt a way you can be proud of.

15. *Only gobblers (turkeys with visible beards) are legal game during the spring season.* Do your homework and know the difference. Be sure of your target.

16. *Make sure that the gobbler is within sure range of the shotgun and shoot at only the neck and head area.* If that bird is close enough to kill with a body shot, you will have ruined some of the finest eatin you could ever experience.

17. *Don't allow the meat to spoil.* Know how to take care of that bird and make plans ahead of time.

18. *Do your homework before season - scouting, practice calling, pattern your gun, etc.* The American Wild Turkey is the most difficult game in North America to hunt. Give yourself all the advantages you can.

19. *Be positive of your target.* After you pull the trigger, it's too late.

20. *Make sure other hunters know you're there.* In other states, turkey hunters often place a wide strip of hunter orange material or a hunter orange vest above their blind to alert other hunters. They also place a sign on their vehicles stating that a camouflaged turkey hunter is in the area.

Good luck. And have a safe and enjoyable hunt!

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